

the enormously positive contributions of Hispanic Americans to this diverse Nation of ours. Hispanic Americans are some of the most patriotic and hard-working people that America has ever known. Whether serving in the military or creating jobs, the Hispanic community is the embodiment of the American Dream and the embodiment of American values, faith in God, devotion to family and love of country, which is precisely why Hispanic Heritage Month is an entirely appropriate time to commend the Hispanic American community for enriching the diverse fiber of this great Nation.

A TRIBUTE TO LEO BORJA TUDELA

(Mr. SABLAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, today, as we struggle with the future of the United States Postal Service, I want to pay tribute to one of the many dedicated individuals who has kept the mail on its way to our homes and businesses in this Nation for almost five decades.

Mr. Leo Borja Tudela was born in the village of Garapan in the Northern Mariana Islands in 1943. His mother, Magdalena Tudela Salas, was the daughter of Jesus Sablan Tudela and Anunciacion Borja Tudela, who raised their grandson.

Leo worked very hard for an education, moving to Guam for high school, returning to college after service in the United States Army, and finally earning a master's degree with honors in California.

Mr. Tudela took his education and crafted a career with the Postal Service, rising to a vice presidency, and today directing operations in the Asia/Pacific-Micronesia region as a member of the Postal Career Executive Service.

Leo Borja Tudela's career exemplifies the power and benefit of education. I congratulate him. And I encourage young people in the Northern Mariana Islands and throughout America to follow that example for their own benefit and for the ultimate benefit of our Nation.

Today, as we struggle with the future of the U.S. Postal Service, I want to take a moment to pay tribute to one of the many dedicated individuals, who has kept the mail on its way to our homes and businesses in this nation for almost five decades.

Mr. Leo Borja Tudela was born in the Northern Mariana Islands in the village of Garapan on the island of Saipan on July 17, 1943. His mother, Magdalena Tudela Salas, was the daughter of Jesus Sablan Tudela and Anunciacion Borja Tudela, who raised their grandson.

Leo was educated at William S. Reyes Elementary School in Chalan Kanoa, graduating with honors. During his elementary years, Leo also served as an altar boy at the Chalan Kanoa Diocese Catholic Church. There he met Pale Arnold, who recognized the young man's

intelligence and drive and arranged for him to attend St. Jude Intermediate Catholic School in Sinajana on Guam under the sponsorship of the Capuchin Fathers in Agaña Heights. Leo completed his education on Guam at George Washington High School, serving as editor in chief of the yearbook and graduating in 1962 with honors.

Mr. Borja's education was interrupted by the draft—he served in the U.S. Army for three years, earning a Soldier of the Month Award and Good Conduct Medal before being honorably discharged. But after this military service, Mr. Tudela immediately returned to his education. He first entered the Junior College of San Mateo, California, then moved to California State University at Hayward, California.

This is also when he began to work for the U.S. Postal Service, which would become his life-long career. He took up a part-time position as a postal assistant in South San Francisco, and later moved to full-time, though still in school. Mr. Borja worked the graveyard shift, eight hours each night, then went to his college classes in the morning. Afternoons and evenings were devoted to studies and a little rest. Then at eleven o'clock at night it was back to the post office to move the mail. Mr. Borja maintained this grueling schedule throughout the time it took to earn first his bachelor's degree and then a master's—graduating with honors in both degrees.

Now Mr. Borja's postal career began in earnest. He was promoted to management and sent as an equal employment office specialist to Salt Lake City, Utah. His next assignment was as MSC Director of Employee and Labor Relations in Boise, Idaho, then District Director of E&LR in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in Boston, Massachusetts, and in Santa Ana, California. Moving up the management ladder, Mr. Borja was appointed to be the Manager Sectional Center, City of Industry, East of Los Angeles, California, Division Manager/Postmaster in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and District Manager for South Florida in Miami.

In 1992, he became the Vice President for the Southeast Area, responsible for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee and Mississippi. He oversaw operations involving more than 92,000 employees, 20,731 post offices, and a budget of three billion dollars.

Throughout his rise in responsibility, Mr. Tudela—and the Postal Service—continued to invest in his education. He attended a number of executive training programs in the Ivy League, at MIT, the University of Virginia, and at Duke.

Though his career had taken him far from his humble roots in the Northern Mariana Islands, Mr. Tudela never forgot his home; and, eventually, his postal service work returned him to the Pacific. He is presently the Director, Asia/Pacific-Micronesia, PCES—Postal Career Executive Service, overseeing all mail to and from Micronesia. He is involved with managing, and participated in crafting, the compact agreements between the United States and the Freely Associated States of Micronesia, which include the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia. This work requires him to coordinate with the U.S. State Department and its three embassies in these nations, and with the U.S. Department of the Interior, which also has responsibilities in the region. The U.S. Postal Service and the services it provides are an important component of

those compact relationships, benefiting both the Freely Associated States governments and businesses in Micronesia.

He has contributed to development on his home island, as well. In 1990, Mr. Tudela was very instrumental in building a new post office in his birth village of Chalan Kanoa. Land was at a premium on the islands at that time and the Northern Marianas government asked for three million dollars for the property needed for the new facility. Mr. Tudela, through his personal perseverance, worked with the local government, even having local legislation enacted, which resulted in the land being leased to the Postal Service for just one dollar per year for 40 years, with an option for another 40 years truly an example of good financial management at the Postal Service. With the land issue overcome, Mr. Tudela then took personal interest in overseeing the design and construction of the new post office in "C.K.," which the community much enjoys to this day.

Certainly another point of pride for Mr. Tudela has been the opportunity to participate in dedication of special issue stamps commemorating his home. In 1993, Mr. Tudela was there to dedicate the Northern Mariana Islands stamp issued by the U.S. Postal Service. And just last month, on August 12, he dedicated the Northern Mariana Islands stamp that is part of the Flags of Our Nation series.

Although this well-deserved tribute is for Mr. Leo Borja Tudela, it is my hope that calling attention to his life, which began so humbly but has proceeded to become so noteworthy, will serve as an inspiration for others from the Northern Mariana Islands. The lesson is well known, but not always applied: pursue an education—not just in youth, but throughout life, do your best, persevere, work hard. Your effort will be rewarded, just as it has for Mr. Leo Borja Tudela, and will benefit us all.

CHINESE DRYWALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. ROBY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. RIGELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RIGELL. Now, imagine you worked hard and saved for a down payment of your own, a down payment on the American Dream. Imagine that you found the right place, secured the financing and happily started your life as a homeowner.

Now, imagine months later, though, that your house is filled with a putrid, rotten, egg-like odor that just permeates your home, makes your children sick with severe headaches and nose bleeds. Imagine the mounting frustration when the copper coils on your AC unit and your refrigerator corrode, develop leaks and have to be replaced again and again and again.

You ultimately have to move your family into a rental home and find out that the cause of all of this pain and grief is nothing other than defective drywall that fills your home and was imported from China. Madam Speaker, many of my constituents don't have to imagine that nightmare. They are experiencing it and living it right now.